

CONFESSIONS OF A WIFE

I WONDER WITH WHOM JIM EDIE IS IN LOVE

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Last night Dick got over to Eliene's about 11:30 and as he came in Eliene said: "Here you, Mr. Married Man, give an account of yourself. Why have you left a perfectly good and radiantly lovely wife to the blandishments of your best friend for hours?"

"Probably because, as the eyes of all married men are blinded to the fascinations of their wives Dick does not realize how tempting Margie is," said Mollie.

"Young women, when did you learn the characteristics of married men?" asked Pat Sullivan.

"Well, I have two brothers, both of whom are married to beautiful women—women that other men always find interesting, and yet each of them treats his wife more or less like a doll which, when he is tired of playing with, he can lay aside with a perfectly contented frame of mind because he knows that no other man will want to play with it."

Dick was furious. Mollie certainly is a fearless and outspoken young woman, for she continued: "When I look about among my married women friends I always say 'Me for being an old maid.'"

"Talk about the inconsistency of woman, she isn't in it with a man. Before a man is married he thinks the girl he is in love with the most fascinating creature he ever met, but as soon as he marries her he seems to think that he really does not need to keep up the little courtesies and flatteries that won her. She becomes then like his favorite cigar, something which he knows is all right, but which all his friends think is execrable. Men, you know, only smoke another man's cigar under protest."

There was a general laugh, and each man looked rather guilty, for every one of them thought his particular brand of cigar the only smoke.

"But, gentle married man," said

Mollie, who simply delights in being iconoclastic and revels when she is making Dick angry, "look into your own heart—have you never been tempted by your friend's wife?"

Every married man in the crowd shouted "Never!" and then blushed, because all the married women got up simultaneously and with a courtesy murmured "Thank you."

"Of course, I know you are all Sir Bayards, absolutely above reproach," said Mollie, rather cynically, "but I also want to tell you that I have never yet known a woman, married or single, who was so unrepentant that there was not some kind of a man ready to tell her a few flattering lies and if a married man would just realize that if he does not do this to his wife there is always another man who is not only willing but glad to do so—it would save a lot of masculine pride and feminine heartaches."

"Mollie, you don't know what you are talking about," said Dick. "A man's best friends don't make love to his wife."

"Oh, don't they?" exclaimed Mollie. "Well, if they don't it's because the wives won't let them—they most always try if the wife appeals to them."

"I don't think you are right, Mollie," said Pat Sullivan. "I have never felt an inclination to make love to any of my friends' wives."

"That's just it," said Mollie. "You never had the inclination to do so, but if you did would the knowledge that she was your friend's wife keep you from doing so?"

"Love, my dear Mollie," spoke up Harry Symone, "is a queer thing. I believe with you that when a man thinks he is in love he will let nothing stand in the way of his getting his desire, if possible."

"Therefore, all you dubs of married men," said Jim Edie, "take warn-